

Iowa Department of Human Services

Offer #401-HHS-010: Children with Disabilities

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This offer is for:		This offer includes the following appropriations:
	New activity	Family Support Subsidy
X	Status quo existing activity	
	Improved existing activity	

Result(s) Addressed:

Provide financial assistance to parents of children with disabilities to enable them to continue living at home.

Primary Results

- **Improve Iowans' Health**
 - Improve quality of life
 - Strengthen and support families
 - Help parents of children with disabilities access and coordinate services
 - All Iowans have access to quality care
 - Continuity of care
 - Improving the health care system
 - Care coordination
 - Cross system referrals and coordination

Secondary Results

- **Improving Student Achievement**
 - Secure and nurturing families
 - Family stability

Program Description:

Who:

This offer serves children with serious emotional disturbance, mental retardation, developmental disabilities, or brain injuries and their families, based on their income level.

- Families are eligible for a Family Support Subsidy (FSS) if their net income is below \$40,000. In FY 09 the Family Support Subsidy program can serve 354 children each month. Approximately 70% of children receiving a family support subsidy also receive Medicaid waiver services. In 2006 the legislature approved changing the eligibility criteria by excluding children who receive a special needs adoption subsidy. The legislation also excludes children who receive waiver services and reside in a county where children-at-home (CAH) services are available.
- Families are eligible for CAH services if their net income is below \$60,000. The CAH program anticipates serving over 700 children in FY 09.

What:

Currently, this offer funds two related programs.

- Family Support Subsidy (FSS): The family support subsidy program provides a monthly payment to families to help keep families together by defraying some of the special costs of caring for a child with a disability at home. Families have flexibility to decide how to best spend the subsidy to meet their child's special needs.
- Children-At-Home (CAH) program: The Children-At-Home program provides similar assistance to that provided by the FSS program, except that the assistance is provided on an "as needed" basis and is generally time-limited, in many cases one-time-only. Families receive an average of \$350 per year under this program. In addition to helping families purchase needed services and resources, this program also provides service coordination when needed by the family. In some cases, this involves helping the family access services available through other community resources.

How:

- Family Support Subsidy: The FSS program consists of a monthly cash payment made to families who have a child with a disability. DHS reviews eligibility annually.
- Children-at-Home: DHS contracts with local agencies to provide funding and resource coordination for families of children with developmental delays through the CAH program. Each site is required to form a parent advisory council. Each council sets local spending guidelines and helps identify additional local resources. CAH sites are able to leverage additional resources for families through their service coordination activities.
 - Respite
 - Ramps for wheelchairs and help purchase vans with lifts
 - Fences for deaf or autistic children
 - Specialized recreation such as hippo therapy
 - Educational software
 - Specialized clothing
 - Specialized camps such as "Camp Sunnyside"
 - Transportation costs
 - Specialized therapy
 - Nutritional supplements not paid by Medicaid
 - Conferences for parents of children with rare disorders
 - Lodging during prolonged hospital stays
 - Child care for children who are too old for traditional child care settings
- A .25 FTE in the Division of Child and Family Services provides administrative support.

Offer Description:

Today's Activities and Results:

In 2008, the General Assembly increased the allocation for the Children at Home program from \$333,212 to \$433,212, within the overall Children with Disabilities appropriation.

- Family Support Subsidy (FSS): The FSS program is funded at \$1,503,222. It provides monthly cash payments to families with a net income below \$40,000 that have a child with serious emotional disturbance, mental retardation, developmental disabilities, or brain injury. The FSS program can serve 354 children at any one time at the current funding level. There is currently a waiting list of 115 children.

- Children-At-Home (CAH): The CAH program is funded at \$433,212. It provides time-limited “as needed” services to families with a net income below \$60,000 that have a child with a disability. The CAH program is being expanded from 14 to 22 counties and will serve an estimated 750 children in SFY 2009.

This offer includes 2 changes for SFY 2010.

- First, this offer includes a proposal to increase the administrative cap in SFY 2010 from \$20,000 (1%) to \$30,000 (1.55%). No additional funds are requested to make this change.
- Second, this offer would redirect \$433,212 to the Family Support Subsidy to reduce the waiting list and eliminate the Children-At-Home program.

Offer Justification:

Legal requirements:

Federal:

Not applicable.

State:

The Family Support Subsidy and Children-At-Home programs are governed under Chapter 225C.46-7 of the Iowa Code.

Rationale:

Improve Quality of Life

The Family Support Subsidy and the Children-At-Home program assist families by providing funds to pay for services and supports not covered by Medicaid or when the need exceeds Medicaid limits. By linking families to sources of support, the Children-At-Home program is able to help maximize use of existing resources. Children-At-Home is also able to respond quickly to families who are on waiting lists or have immediate needs due to an emergency.

Strengthen and Support Families

- Local Children-At-Home programs have advisory councils of whom at least half of the members are parents of children with developmental delays or special health care needs. These councils give parents a voice in setting local policies and help DHS and other providers hear directly from parents regarding what assistance they need in order to better care for their children.

Results:

Result	SFY 2008 Actual Level	SFY 2009 Budget Level	SFY 2010 Offer Level
Number of children the Family Support Subsidy helped maintain at home	378	354	450
Number of children Children-At-Home helped maintain at home	616	750	0